

I. INTRODUCTION

The position is located in a field location of the Processed Products Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service. The incumbent serves as a trainee and is engaged in grading and inspection work on processed fruits and vegetables and related products at processing plants, Field Offices, and/or inspection points.

II. DUTIES

Studies instructional material, the official standards, and related regulations which govern the grading, inspection, and certification of products.

Receives instructions on the job and in the classroom in determining general product quality, on recognizing specific product defects and diseases, on performing sanitation inspections, and on the practical application of the standards and regulations in general.

Assists higher graded Agricultural Commodity Graders by performing portions of the work under their guidance. Such tasks include selecting representative product samples, applying prescribed laboratory procedures to measure the quantifiable grading factors, and preparing worksheets and summary reports of gradings and inspections.

As the trainee's familiarity with products and technical proficiency with procedures increases, the trainee may make quality determinations on a few designated products and make sanitation inspections under close guidance.

Makes observations to determine if plant facilities, processing equipment, and personnel are in compliance with Branch sanitation requirements and FDA regulations.

III. EVALUATION FACTORS

1. Knowledge Required by the Position (550 points)

Knowledge of the common types of fruits and vegetables and their characteristics.

Familiarity with the general types of processing and storage methods pertinent to processed fruits and vegetables, as these affect general quality.

Knowledge of the official grade standards and regulations to apply the specific grading and inspection procedures.

Skill in applying grading and inspection techniques to a limited number of commodities.

Skill in establishing rapport and conducting oneself in a tactful and diplomatic manner with industry personnel to maintain good working relations.

2. Supervisory Controls (25 points)

The supervisor or employee of higher grade provides the assignment, giving detailed and specific instructions on the methods to be used in performing each phase of the work.

The grader works in strict adherence to the instructions. Assistance is readily available while the work is being performed, and the employee consults the supervisor or employee of higher grade to clarify the original instructions, product conditions, or circumstances which are new or unusual to the employee.

The work is closely reviewed. It is checked while in progress and upon completion for compliance with instructions, for adherence to prescribed methods and procedures, for technical proficiency, and for the accuracy of any determination.

3. Guidelines (25 points)

Written guidelines include parts of the official grade standards, regulations, visual aids, instructional training material, technical manuals, and other written guidelines. However, the trainee is provided with the specific guidelines appropriate to the phase of work to be done. These guidelines are further explained to the employee before the work is performed.

The trainee adheres closely to the guidelines and instructions. Situations not directly covered by the guides (or borderline cases) are referred to the supervisor or employee of higher grade for clarification (or for determination).

4. Complexity (75 points)

The work involves following methods and procedures which are closely related. The technical factors necessary to consider are made relatively apparent and are readily verified.

Variations in the work stem primarily from the particular type of fruit and vegetable being graded.

5. Scope and Effect (75 points)

The work consists of performing specific procedures such as laboratory tests to measure product grading factors, or to obtain representative product samples which affect the final grade or condition determination.

The work affects the accuracy and reliability of the final determination and certification.

6. Personal Contacts (25 points)

Contacts are primarily with other inspectors. However, during the course of performing duties, the employee also has contacts with employees of processing facilities, such as machine operators, packers, lab technicians, and warehouse workers.

7. Purpose of Contacts (50 points)

Contacts with industry employees are for the purpose of coordinating the grader's own sampling or grading work with plant activities. Plant employees generally are cooperative in these matters. Minor difficulties raised by plant employees may be resolved by the trainee, but generally, questions and problems are routinely referred to a lead inspector for resolution.

8. Physical Demands (50 points)

Commodity grading work requires periods of physical exertion to lift and move boxes and cartons of product often weighing at least 50 pounds; prolonged periods of standing, walking, stooping, bending, and climbing; physical coordination and finger dexterity in at least one hand to perform digital examinations of commodities; ability to detect abnormalities in the commodity through normal or corrected vision in at least one eye for distance, depth perception, and color; and the ability to assure safety in a highly mechanized and/or noisy environment through adequate or correctable hearing; and the ability to determine product quality through smell and/or taste.

9. Work Environment (20 points)

The work environment includes exposure to freezing temperatures, slippery surfaces, moving materials, handling equipment, high noise level, and similar risks typical of processed fruit and vegetable and related processing plants and storage areas.

TOTAL POINTS - 895